

Southern Tasmanian Ski Association

Presidents Report - 24 November 2021

This report is being written after a period of significant challenge for STSA. After working through the challenges of the pandemic with no opportunity to run the ski tows in 2020, it was a very similar story in 2021. A very mild winter with limited snowfalls meant there was insufficient snow base to contemplate tow operations during the official season, although a single day of Spring operation was managed on 26th September.

It is apparent that climate change and global warming are affecting the operations of the Mt Mawson Ski Field, meaning that we have to be prepared to be flexible and offer skiing when snow permits, whilst also recognizing that income is by no means assured.

Nevertheless it was still a very positive year for STSA and its enthusiastic volunteers. Our 2020 Annual General meeting was held on the mountain for the first time last November, to coincide with a working bee and social function. Well-attended working bees were then held in February, March, April and July 2021 with valuable progress made on preparing the ski field for the coming season. Twenty three individual volunteers put in over 60 man days of work at Mt Mawson – and that is just the ones I was able to record! After focusing on the Mawson tow for the past couple of years, this year we were able to turn our attention to the Uni and Rodway tows.

Highlights included finishing the clearing out of STSA gear from the old Belt Issue Hut (truly the end of an era), construction of new snow fence panels and repair of old snow fencing on the Uni tow, splicing and installation of a new rope on Uni, clearing out of rubbish and general repairs to the Rodway tow hut, and test running the Rodway tow.

I would particularly like to mention Craig Larsson for his proactive work in providing new enhancements to ski field equipment. Craig does a lot of behind-the-scenes organizing, and this year he also constructed a very smart Perspex window for use in the ticket office to make issuing of belts much easier without letting too much cold into the room. The new ticket office is a great improvement over the old belt issue hut, and provides a warm, comfortable space for volunteers to work in when hiring out ski belts. This year we trialled an electronic Point of Sale terminal for the first time, and on our single day of operation more than 50% of the payments made were by credit card. This makes reconciliation of funds a lot easier, and also meets the expectations of many skiers who are used to paying by card rather than cash. A big thanks to

Mischi Sigrist and Karen Davis who operated the POS terminal so efficiently on the first (and only) day of operations. For the first time we were also able to sell some hot drinks and snacks from the ticket office, which also improved the enjoyment of the day for many of our visitors.

It is noteworthy that the single day of operation occurred after the official ski season roster had been completed, and it was great to see how volunteers from different ski clubs pulled together at short notice to put the ski day on. I believe this community spirit, and sharing of resources between ski clubs is going to be increasingly important as we go forward, as otherwise there may be some clubs that miss out on being involved with tow operations for a number of years just by virtue of the way the rostered weekends align with suitable snowfalls.

STSA has invested significantly in the ski field over the past few years, including the fit-out of the new STSA leasehold in the new Mt Mawson Day Shelter building, and repairing and replacing snow fences to ensure that when snow falls it is captured on the ski runs. Unfortunately the lack of income for two successive years, combined with costs of infrastructure upgrades and insurance means that STSA's financial position is now of some concern. This will mean the work program for this coming summer will need to avoid capital expenditure where possible to reduce outgoings as much as possible. Let us hope that the current La Nina leads to a better ski season for us in 2022.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the great support of the STSA committee, the volunteers of the Mt Mawson Ski Patrol and everybody who helps out with the ski field. Without their efforts it would not be possible to continue to offer skiing and boarding at Mt Mawson. It's a great group of people, brought together by a common interest in being outdoors in the beautiful Tasmanian outdoor environment, and a willingness to help others have a great time in the snow.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Peter Davis

STSA President

24 November 2021